indicating the precise stand taken by India during the last eight months; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction in each of such cases?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) India's stand in world fora has been based on our principled position on issues, bearing in mind our national interest. Far from being isolated in the UN, we have maintained our traditional solidarity with NAM and G-77 and actively promoted consensus-building on a wide range of issues.

At the WTO, particularly at the recent Ministerial Conference in Singapore, we worked closely with other like-mined countries for an outcome which safeguards India's besic position.

Pressure by U.S. Federal Communications Commission for reduction in rates of International Calls

*171. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI:
SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Federal Communications Commission has alleged that India has been charging more by way of accounting rates on international calls;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the said U.S. Agency is pressurising all developing countries to reduce international telephone charges and Total Accounting Rates (TAR);

(c) if so, whehter the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) has made any protest to the U.S. Agency and the response thereto; and

(d) the other steps Government propose to take to oppose the move of U.S. Agency?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The U.S. Federal Communication Commission have released on 19.12.1996 a "Notice of Proposed Rule Making" (NPRM) which sets out their proposals for revising their bench-mark settlement rates for international message telephone service (IMTS) between the USA & other countries within a suggested transition period. The objective of this proceeding, according to the Federal Communication Commission, is to attain reform in the international accounting rate system and there by help to lower international calling prices for consumers. Comments of interested Parties have been solicited on their proposals.

(c) Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. has filed its response to FCC's proposal expressing its reservations on the "Notice of Proposed Rule Making", but no response has been received, so far.

(d) A reply at the level of the Government is also proposed to be sent shortly.

पिछड़े क्षेत्रों के लिए अलग विभाग की स्थापना

*172. **श्री शिव चरण सिंह:** क्या गृह मंत्री 4 सितम्बर, 1996 को राज्य सभा में अतारांकित प्रश्न 3042 के दिए गए उत्तर को देखेंगे और यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार राजस्थान, उत्तर प्रदेश, बिहार और मध्य प्रदेश के अविकसित क्षेत्रों के समुचित विकास हेतु एक पृथक विभाग की स्थापना करने का विचार रखती है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है और यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं?

गृह मंत्री (श्री इन्द्रजीत गुप्त): (क) जी नहीं, श्रीमान्।

(ख) अविकसित क्षेत्रों का उचित विकास, योजना आदि के वर्तमान तंत्र के माध्यम से प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। क्षेत्रीय असन्तुलन कम करने के लिए उत्तरोत्तर पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं में विभिन्न स्कीमें और कार्यक्रम चलाए गए हैं।

Sukhoi-30 Aircrafts

*173. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received Sukhoi-30 Fighter aircrafts from Russia as per agreement;

(b) whether pilots have been trained to fly these aircrafts, and

(c) whether the Government of Russia has agreed for transfer of technology to the Government of India?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The contract has been concluded. The first lot of 8 aircraft will be delivered in March 1997.

(b) Pilots are undergoing training in Russia.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Disparity in the Density of Population between Southern and Northern States

*174. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN:
SHRI P. SOUNDARARAJAN:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the density of population has come down considerably in the Southern States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry and Karnataka as compared to the Northern States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware that this growing difference in the density of population between the Southern and Northern States is likely to result in reduced representation in all forms based on the basis of population; and

(d) the action Government propose to take to see that the Southern States do not suffer for effecting population control measures seriously?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) A draft statement on the National Population Policy has been prepared which envisages freezing of seats in Parliament and State Legislatures upto the year 2011. This draft has already been laid on the table of the Rajya Sabha in reply to Starred Question No. 262 answered on the 10th December, 1996.

Cases of Spying by Foreign Diplomats

*175. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of spying or espionage by foreign diplomatic officials detected during the last one year;

(b) the nature of the cases;

(c) the action taken thereon; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to prevent espionage?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): (a) and (b) No case of spying or espionage by foreign diplomatic officials has come to notice during last one year. However, two cases of espionage involving non-diplomatic personnel of a High Commission in New Delhi and their Indian contacts came to notice during 1996. These two cases relate to passing on defence related documents.

(c) As the conduct of the two High Commission officials in these two matters was found to be incompatible with their official status, they were declared person-non-grata by the Government and were asked to leave the country. Both the officials have also since left the country. Two cases namely Case No. 469/96 of PS Delhi Cantt. under Section 3/9 of Official Secrets Act, 1923 and Case No. 930/96 of PS Defence Colony, Delhi, under Section 3, 5, 9 of Official Secrets Act, 1923 and 120-B IPC have been registered and are 'subjudice'.

(d) Various security agencies and the State Police Organisations have been sensitised. They have been advised to beef-up their security arrangements. The Government is committed to take all steps necessary to safeguard National security.